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SUBJECT: Bolivia CN Update November 09

REF: (A) LA PAZ 1554; (B) LA PAZ 1558

**¶1. SUMMARY:**

\* Interdiction: Year-to-date seizures of precursors and labs rose substantially; seizures of cocaine base rose slightly; and cocaine HCL seizures declined. In a series of 43 joint operations called "Plan Inca," Bolivian and Peruvian Counter Narcotics (CN) forces seized 100 kilos of cocaine and arrested 15 individuals. (paras 2-8).

\* Eradication: The Joint Eradication Task Force (JTF) eradicated 6,229 hectare equivalents (HAs) from January to November 30, surpassing the GOB's 2009 target of 5,000 HAs. (paras 9-10).

\* Development and Training: NAS conducted an International Police Women's Conference on Discrimination and Human Rights. The GOB moved forward on creating a national polygraph unit. Significant NAS-sponsored training continued. (paras 11-14).

\* Prevention and Demand Reduction: NAS funded and coordinated training for 98 rehabilitation clinic staff members. (para 15).

\* Aviation: NAS C130 Program (Black Devils) flew 45 hours in support of CN operations. NAS Heli and Small-wing Program (Red Devils) supported a UNODC project to document coca cultivation levels. (paras 16-17).

END SUMMARY.

**Interdiction Statistics**

**¶1.** Jan. - Nov. 2009 vs. Jan. - Nov. 2008: CN units conducted 5 percent more operations (10,655); seized 1 percent more cocaine base (20.6 MT); 74 percent more marijuana (25.3 MT); 94 percent more solid precursors (814 MT); 18 percent more liquid precursors (1,505,038.91 liters). CN units also destroyed 167 percent more refining labs (16) and 100 percent more recycling labs (8). However, CN police seized 33 percent less cocaine HCL (4.7 MT); 21 percent less coca leaf (1,520 MT); destroyed 11 percent fewer maceration pits (6,347) and detained six percent fewer suspects

## Interdiction Operations

¶12. In the first half of November, Bolivian and Peruvian CN forces carried out a large joint-operation along the border between the two countries called "Plan Inca." CN units destroyed 9 labs and 10 maceration pits; seized 117 kilos of cocaine; 6.5 MT of Bolivian coca leaf; 0.85 MT of Peruvian coca leaf; 360 kilos of solid precursors; 300 liters of liquid precursors; and arrested 23 suspects (22 Bolivians and 1 Peruvian).

¶13. In the second half of November, Bolivian and Argentine CN forces carried out a large joint-operation along the border between the two countries called "Plan AR-BOL." The CN units destroyed 15 labs and 27 maceration pits; CN units seized 534 kilos of cocaine; 4.4 MT of coca leaf; 3.2 MT of solid precursors; 5,390 liters of liquid precursors; and arrested 14 suspects.

¶14. FELCN commander General Oscar Nina told reporters that both large operations were part of Bolivia's effort to increase bilateral CN cooperation with neighbors in order to minimize the deficiencies that resulted from the "departure" of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

¶15. During a series of coordinated operations in the Department of La Paz November 20-26, FELCN seized 93 kilos of cocaine and five tons of marijuana, detained 17 people, and seized five vehicles. FELCN reported that it carried out several of the operations at the international airport in El Alto, where it seized cocaine hidden in various objects, such as musical instruments, destined for Turkey, France, and Spain.

¶16. On November 22, FELCN Santa Cruz arrested two men and seized 309 kilos of cocaine base paste at a clandestine airstrip located on private property in Taperas, a rural area in the Department of Santa Cruz. FELCN reported that the cocaine paste had come from Peru, and that the men intended to fly it to a laboratory in another Santa Cruz location to be turned into cocaine HCl and then exported.

¶17. FELCN destroyed two large-scale cocaine factories on November 25 in the Sicaya municipality in the Department of Cochabamba. FELCN estimated that the factories had produced 180 kilos of cocaine base paste during three months of operation, and that they could have produced one mega ton per year if they had remained in operation. The seizures brought the total number of seized factories in the region to 12 during the month.

¶18. On November 30, FELCN discovered over 58 kilos of cocaine HCl hidden inside a vehicle with six passengers on the road between Filadelfia and Porvenir in Pando Department. The car was covered with election campaign material for the ruling Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) and had election material inside as well. Officials from the MAS Pando office denied that MAS had any involvement in the incident, and suggested that the traffickers may have been using the election propaganda as a means to mislead police.

## Eradication

¶19. JTF eradicated 6,229 hectares from January to November 30, surpassing the GOB's 2009 target of 5,000 HAs. During the same period in 2008 JTF eradicated 5,437 HA, over 12 percent less than in 2009. JTF destroyed 29,550 square meters of seedbeds from January to November, a significant decrease from the approximately 64,176 square meters destroyed during the same period in 2008. (Note: The destruction of 10 square meters of seedbeds prevents the eventual cultivation of one hectare of coca. End note.).

¶10. Despite the steady pace of eradication noted above, the GOB has declined to conduct significant eradication operations in so-called "zero-coca" zones, specifically in National Parks in the Chapare region, where cocalero federations are prominent. The JTF has eradicated approximately three percent of estimated coca in the National Parks and we are aware of no plans to eradicate in these areas because of possible conflicts with illegal coca growers and drug traffickers.

## Law Enforcement and Development Training

¶11. NAS teamed up with the Bolivian National Police (BNP), the Swiss Embassy, and a Bolivian congresswoman from the ruling Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) to organize in La Paz a November 4-5 International Police Women's Conference on Discrimination and Human Rights. The conference drew 172 participants from Bolivia, the United States, and 12 Latin American countries. (reftel B).

¶12. GOB Minister of Government Alfredo Rada signed on September 15, 2009 a GOB resolution to create a new national polygraph unit that will be used exclusively in the GOB's CN program. All GOB CN officers will be required to take and pass a polygraph exam prior to being approved for assignment. NAS had worked with the GOB for over a year to achieve this result. NAS will not be involved in the polygraph process, but will provide both administrative support and quality control oversight.

¶13. NAS completed the installation of a new "I-3" Case Tracking System at the BNP's Office of Professional Responsibility's (OPR) National Disciplinary Tribunal in La Paz. The system is a database that will allow BNP to track all allegations and cases regarding police officer integrity violations. The OPR is already using the system and reports positive results.

### ¶14. NAS-funded training during the month included:

\* Seventy female police officers from Bolivia and neighboring countries participated in the third and final month of a NAS-funded Advanced CN Training course at the GARRAS School in Chimore. NAS Director will attend the December 11 graduation ceremony; Vice Minister Felipe Caceres is expected to attend.

\* Forty-five BNP officers and prosecutors completed a one-week NAS-funded Trafficking in Persons course in the city of Santa Cruz. The graduates will be assigned to six NAS-supported

Special TIP Investigative Units that we plan to establish along the Bolivian borders with Brazil, Argentina, and Peru.

\* Forty-six FELCN officers completed a two-week cyber crime course in La Paz that was jointly sponsored by the BNP and NAS.

### Prevention and Demand Reduction

¶15. NAS funded and coordinated a training class for 98 workers from the Therapeutic Community Rehabilitation Centers of Bolivia (ABCT). The staff from 84 different ABCT centers across the country came to La Paz, Cochabamba, or Santa Cruz to improve knowledge and skills related to intervention and rehabilitation techniques.

### Aviation

¶16. The NAS C130 Program (Black Devils) flew 45 hours in support of CN operations. The NAS Heli and Small Wing Program (Red Devils) supported a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) project to document the level of coca cultivation in Santa Ana de Suapi (known as Suapi) in the Alto Beni River Valley. RDTF also supported a FELCN interdiction operation on the Bolivian-Argentine border.

¶17. NAS completed the last of our helicopter refurbishments in the UH-1H fleet. The RDTF now operates nine UH-1H aircraft and one C-206. A second C-206 will be ready for use after approximately three months of extensive maintenance work.  
Creamer